

# Isolation Times



**Attlebridge/Alderford ♦ Bylaugh ♦ Elsing ♦ Gt & Lt Witchingham ♦ Lyng ♦ Reepham ♦ Salle ♦ Sparham ♦ Swannington ♦ Thurning ♦  
Weston Longville ♦ Wood Dalling**

## **Words of Light and Hope from Bishop Tony Footitt**

It will be St. Valentine's Day next Sunday. It's good to remind ourselves of the actual story of Valentine, which is about far more than sending someone a card. Valentine is not just a saint. He is also a martyr. In the third century AD the Roman Emperor Claudius persecuted and hounded the Christians. Valentine kept his Christian faith a secret, but he used to take messages to some of his fellow Christians who were in prison for their faith - a brave thing to do. One day when he was doing this, he was challenged by a guard. This resulted in Valentine being condemned to death in Rome. Meanwhile he had fallen in love with his gaoler's daughter. He left a secret love-note for her on his way to his execution. Later on, his commemoration became mixed up with a Roman pagan festival called Lupercalia (a celebration of love) in mid-February. We are living in times of a new phenomenon - the rise of false information and violent bullying on line. We need not worry about the precise

origins of Valentine's Day. What is important is the challenge this brave man gives us to support so many who feel mocked and isolated for standing up for what they believe is good and right. Valentine challenges us to pray for them and for courage for ourselves!

### **Prayer**

We thank you, Heavenly Father, for the example of your servant Valentine, and pray for all who are despised or mocked for their faith in person or on line.

Give them the courage to endure and give us the courage to defend them. Bless all who fall in love especially those who find it difficult to be open about their love or are subject to gossip and inuendo.

May we all be thankful for true friendship and marriage. We pray this in the knowledge of your love for us within the loving Trinity of Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

+ Tony Footitt

## **This week's Services**

**9am** Pre-recorded Holy Communion service on Youtube, RWV website or Facebook.

**10.15am** Informal Sunday Worship on Zoom with Coffee Social afterwards from 11.15am.  
*Everyone is welcome to either of both of our Zoom sessions*

Zoom Meeting ID: **825 0887 5273**  
Password: **374589**

Dial-in numbers (to join by telephone):  
0131 460 1196  
0203 051 2874  
0203 481 5237  
0203 481 5240

*Dial-in calls cost between 2p-10p per minute depending on your provider, mobiles may be more. Please check before calling.*

**Please note: St Mary's, Reepham will not be open for private prayer on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> February** due to funerals being held during the week, but will be open Saturdays 9am – 4pm.

## Lent Group—Thy Will Be Done

*“Lent is a season when we can follow Jesus by pressing the 'pause' button, taking some time out, dealing with whatever then arises and praying for a new and deeper sense of clarity and purpose for our lives.”*

As in previous years, a 6 session Lent Group will be running each Monday from 15th February to 22nd March at 7pm to 8.15/30pm. Due to Covid restrictions, the group will be meeting via Zoom online or Dial-in.

This year's book is “Thy Will Be Done” by Stephen Cherry. The book is available to order from Aslan for £7.99, with free P&P (<https://www.aslanchristianbooks.com/thy-will-be-done-the-2021-lent-book-9781472978257/>) or call them on **01373 823451** to place an order. ISBN: 9781 4729 7825 7

Everyone is welcome to join us If you would like further information about the book and/or joining the Zoom group, please contact Sue on 01603 870886.

## **From the kitchen window 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

Last weekend we spent an hour each morning counting the number of birds in our garden for the RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch. Saturday was dull, cold and windy and the birds were keeping a low profile. We did see eleven different species, with five each of House Sparrow and Wood Pigeon, but there were long periods when the birds stayed out of sight. Sunday however was bright and frosty, and the birds were hungry after a cold night. It was difficult to keep track of how many of which species were present at any one time. House Sparrows, Starlings and Blackbirds were dashing about, squabbling and chasing all over the garden, with Collared Doves swooping in and scattering the smaller birds from the feeders.



Blue Tits foraged in the evergreen bush by the back window, searching under the leaves for aphids, before popping their heads out to look round for danger then disappearing into the greenery once more. Our lovely male Pied Wagtail turned up to be counted, as did Great Tit and Coal Tit, but there were no Chaffinches or Goldfinches. We have noticed over the years that our results of the Garden Bird Survey give warning of population declines locally, if not nationally. Greenfinches were at one time our most

counted bird but now are rarely seen, and it seems that the other finches are also undergoing a major reduction in numbers, but not all news is bad. We were very pleased that House Sparrows were the most numerous species counted for the first time in twenty eight years, with a total of seven! We did lose them as garden birds altogether for a long time, this being only the third year of their return, so things are clearly improving for them locally. Let's hope the finch numbers will also bounce back given time. Gloria has enjoyed watching Rooks hanging on her feeder, shattering the fat balls and scattering debris which smaller birds pick up from the ground. She has also been watching a Wood Pigeon carrying sticks into a conifer in her neighbour's garden where it is building a nest, and she has a Crocus flowering! Thanks Gloria, it's good to hear of your signs of approaching spring. Do send any sightings of wildlife that you have, so we can all share them [rachel.42rr@btinternet.com](mailto:rachel.42rr@btinternet.com)



**Thinking of and holding in our prayers...** Please light a candle as we pray and remember:

Both **Ted Willem** and **Isobel Ricketts** whose funerals take place this week.

Our thoughts and prayers are with their families and those who knew them.

### **Contact Details**

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